REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2, 3, and 6-8 are pending.

Claims 2, 3, and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102 based on Uenishi et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0013533).

An aspect of the present invention is that a sub message stored in the retaining unit can be deleted without it being output when its life duration has expired. The claims have been amended to more clearly set forth this aspect of the present invention. Amended claim 2, for example, recites in part:

> 2. A message output device, comprising:
> ...
> a retaining unit that at least temporarily retains the sub message acquired by the sub message acquisition unit;
> wherein a life duration time is set at least for each sub message retained in the retaining unit;
> ...
> a message deletion unit that deletes, from among the sub messages retained in the retaining unit, a sub message whose life duration time has expired without outputting the sub message, ...

See also similarly amended claims 6-8.

The buffer 15 of Uenishi was cited for allegedly corresponding to the claimed "retaining unit." However, Uenishi does not teach that data stored in his buffer 15 is deleted without being output. In fact, the very reason that data is stored in buffer 15 is to be the sound source, as Uenishi clearly explains in ¶¶[0040 – 0041]:

> [0040] The voice processor 11 stores the ADPCM (Adaptive Differential Pulse Code Modulation) data, which is read from the recording medium 300, in the buffer 15, and the ADPCM data stored in the buffer 15 becomes the sound source.
> [0041] The voice processor 11 also reads the ADPCM data from the buffer 15 based on a clock signal with a 44.1 kHz frequency, for example. The voice processor 11 executes pitch conversion, noise addition, envelope setting, level setting, verberation addition, and other processing for the ADPCM data which was read.

Any data stored into buffer 15 will be read out. Therefore, when data is deleted (i.e., by being overwritten with new data) it will have been read out. Accordingly, Uenishi cannot be fairly construed to teach, or even suggest, "a message deletion unit that deletes, from among the sub messages retained in the retaining unit, a sub message whose life duration time has expired without outputting the sub message."

In addition, Uenishi does not teach a "life duration time" and expiration of the "life duration time." The Office action asserted that "when the buffer period is over, the life duration time has been expired... ." *O.A., page 5.* However, as best understood from a review of the reference, Uenishi does not appear to describe the notion of "a buffer period." It is not clear how this notion is disclosed in the Uenishi reference. As best understood, data remains in buffer 15 until new data is stored there. ; Uenishi does not teach that the data in the buffer is deleted after expiration of a "buffer period." Accordingly, Uenishi does not teach "wherein a life duration time is set at least for each sub message retained in the retaining unit; ...a message deletion unit that deletes, from among the sub messages retained in the retaining unit, a sub message whose life duration time has expired without outputting the sub message ... ."

For at least the foregoing reasons, the Section 102 rejection of the claims is believed to be overcome.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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